



# NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) in April dropped two-tenths of a percentage point from the previous month to 3.7 percent as shown in Northeast Idaho Table 1. The LMA is 1.6 percentage points lower than the state's rate of 5.3 percent and 2.3 percentage points lower than the national rate of 6.0 percent. Although all four counties dropped over the month, Bonneville and Jefferson Counties had larger percentage point drops. The county rates for April were 4.4 percent in Bingham, 3.3 percent in Bonneville, 3.2 percent in Butte, and 3.8 percent in Jefferson, as shown on State Table 1 on page 3.

A year-over-year comparison shows no change in the unemployment rate for the LMA, although both Jefferson and Butte Counties increased three-tenths of a percentage point. Bonneville County decreased one-tenth of a percentage point and Bingham County remained unchanged. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, decreased two-tenths of a percentage point over the month, but remained constant from April 2001.

All of the other counties in Northeast Idaho decreased in unemployment rates over the month with the exception of Teton County, which remained unchanged. The most notable decreases were seen in Custer and Lemhi Counties, at decreases of 1.1 percentage points each. An increase in both construction and agricultural jobs helped to bring the rates down. A year-over-year comparison shows that all counties decreased with the exception of a gain in Teton County of 1.4 percentage points. As seen over the last few months, the national trend took its toll on Teton County as it is highly dependent on tourism. However, Teton County still holds one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. The current rates are as follows: Clark County 3.5 percent, Custer County 7.2 percent, Fremont County 5.4 percent,

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, & Jefferson counties

	April 2002*	March 2002	April 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b><i>Seasonally Adjusted</i></b>					
Civilian Labor Force	81,320	81,530	81,690	-0.3	-0.5
Unemployment	2,970	3,210	2,990	-7.5	-0.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.7	3.9	3.7		
Total Employment	78,350	78,320	78,700	0.0	-0.4
<b><i>Unadjusted</i></b>					
Civilian Labor Force	80,750	80,500	81,070	0.3	-0.4
Unemployment	2,660	3,400	2,650	-21.8	0.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.3	4.2	3.3		
Total Employment	78,090	77,090	78,420	1.3	-0.4
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	61,690	60,740	62,310	1.6	-1.0
<b><i>Goods-Producing Industries</i></b>	9,060	8,690	9,150	4.3	-1.0
Mining & Construction	4,110	3,850	3,860	6.8	6.5
Manufacturing	4,950	4,840	5,290	2.3	-6.4
Food Processing	2,350	2,310	2,890	1.7	-18.7
Ind. & Com. Mach. & Computer Equip.	510	510	430	0.0	18.6
All Other Manufacturing	2,090	2,020	1,970	3.5	6.1
<b><i>Service-Producing Industries</i></b>	52,630	52,050	53,160	1.1	-1.0
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	2,310	2,300	2,380	0.4	-2.9
Wholesale Trade	5,340	5,310	5,780	0.6	-7.6
Retail Trade	11,230	11,080	11,040	1.4	1.7
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,930	1,930	1,870	0.0	3.2
Services	21,050	20,770	21,190	1.3	-0.7
Government Administration	5,200	5,070	5,410	2.6	-3.9
Government Education	5,570	5,590	5,490	-0.4	1.5
*Preliminary Estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

Lemhi County 6.4 percent, Madison County 1.5 percent, and Teton County 3.6 percent.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 950 jobs over the month as *Construction* naturally increased the job base by 260 jobs with favorable weather appearing and plenty of developments expanding. *Services* added 280 jobs with *Business Services* and *Nonprofit Organizations* each adding 100. *Manufacturing* also added 110 jobs from the *Food Processing* and *All Other Processing* segments. *Retail Trade* showed an increase of 150 jobs, mainly in the *Building Materials & Garden Supplies* segment, while *Government Administration* added 130 jobs in *Local Administration* from hiring temporary spring/summer workers. The only industry that did not show an increase for the month was *Government Education*, with a slight decrease of 20 jobs.

A year-over-year comparison shows a loss of 620 jobs in *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs*. The driving factor of that loss is found in *Service-Producing Industries*, which is hardly unexpected as the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) laid off more than 700 workers during the middle to late part of 2001. Yet, *Services* did not show a drastic overall loss (only 140 jobs) considering that *Engineering & Management* lost 500 jobs

from April 2001. Gains of 160 in *Health Services* and 140 in *Business Services* along with several other small gains softened the decrease. *Manufacturing (Food Processing)* and *Wholesale Trade (Nondurables)*, which are closely related in the LMA, lost over 780 jobs combined. Drought conditions two years in a row, along with supply and demand issues and commodity price variations, have made some farmers skeptical about the outlook this season. So far, six out of the ten counties have declared drought emergencies including Bingham, Butte, Bonneville, Clark, Custer, and Fremont. It is uncertain how productive this growing season will be, but the general feeling remains optimistic. Several increases were seen in the industrial sectors such as *Construction* (250 jobs). The LMA and most of Northeast Idaho continue to expand both residentially and commercially, supplying a plethora of jobs that trickle into many different industrial categories.

## **SPECIAL TOPIC**

### **St. Anthony Celebrates at its Annual Breakfast**

Even with a morning of rain and overcast skies, St. Anthony reportedly still fed around 4,000 people at its annual breakfast event on Memorial Day weekend. The breakfast line was about an hour-and-a-half wait, but that was not much of a deterrent to determined fishermen and their families. This was the 47th year that St. Anthony has offered free breakfast on the Friday before Memorial Day. It was held in the Clyde Keefer Memorial Park and consisted of hash browns, pancakes, and sausage. This was the first year that vendors were able to peddle their wares, as any type of money-making opportunities have been banned in the past. This policy was changed for several reasons. The additional activities help encourage repeat annual visits, it lets locals showcase their talents and businesses, and it gives attendees more to do. Booths were set up specifically for vendor activity, and fees collected helped defray costs while adding a little stimulus to the economy. Organizers want St. Anthony to be known as the place to stop for supplies before travelers head to their fishing and tourist destinations. In addition, this event helps exhibit the friendly and pleasant nature of the town. The Greater St. Anthony Chamber of Commerce is the official sponsor of the breakfast, and it is organized by the Free Fisherman's Breakfast Committee.

## **AREA DEVELOPMENTS**

### **Bonneville County**

- In the first part of 2001, the INEEL originally announced a reduction in force of 1,200 workers within 18 months. Currently, this total stands close to 750 since the summer of 2001. Although the final number will not be known for a while, it has been announced that the nuclear facility could have up to 150 more layoffs this fall. That is well below the

original number, even with attrition that is expected to bring the number to around 1,050. However, those 150 layoffs may not even come about depending on the portioning of the federal budget that is still being developed on behalf of cleanup goals and other targets set by INEEL. The outcome affects both Bonneville and Butte Counties where the INEEL offices and facilities are located, and will have a ripple effect into many other surrounding counties. State political figures are working on the site's behalf on the national scene. At this point, it seems that the outcome of the announced 150 layoffs will not be clear until August.

- The Bonneville Hotel Café has been remodeled and reopened under the name of Connie's Bonneville Restaurant. Bob and Connie Carraway bought the business and changed the menu, serving standard American food rather than the Chinese-American food served there for many years. They also cater banquets. The restaurant is located at the corner of Constitution and Park Avenues in Idaho Falls.
- CD Music and Records is now located at 830 Park Avenue in Idaho Falls, located directly across from Deseret Industries where Deluxe Tone used to be. The business pays cash for used records and CDs, carries many bins of music in various forms, and can transfer music from LPs to CDs, complete with a filtering process to cut out the well-worn sounds on LPs. The store also sells record-playing equipment, receivers, amplifiers, posters, and many accessories from the past.

### **Various Counties**

- Madison County opened a Sonic Drive-In restaurant in May in Rexburg at 345 North Second East. There are 21 spaces for drive-in service along with some walk-up ordering stations. The drive-in serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- Lemhi County has officially broken ground on its \$2.2 million business incubation and innovation center in Salmon. The county believes this will add 51 new jobs by January 2003. ML Technologies already has committed to be part of the center and could ultimately employ up to 60 people. The 15,000-square-foot building is funded through a \$1.5 million federal economic development grant and a \$500,000 grant from the Idaho Department of Commerce. The city donated almost four acres of land for the center.

---

Tanya Albán, Regional Labor Economist  
150 Shoup Avenue, Idaho Falls, ID 83402  
(208) 542-5628  
E-mail: talban@labor.state.id.us